

CIA/OGCR /PN 61.2684/75 ITEM 004 UNCLASSIFIED--PRC CITY BRIEF CANTON

CIA JUL75

01 OF 01

CIA/OGCR PN 61.2684/75

ITEM 004

PRC CITY BRIEF

Canton 廣州



7

CIA/OGCR/GD
PN 61.2684/75
July 1975

KUANG-CHOU (Canton)
(pronounced guahng joe)

| | |
|---|---|
| Chinese romanized system of spelling: | Guangzhou |
| Meaning in Chinese: | extensive district |
| Location: | 23°07'N 113°15'E (approx. latitude of Havana, Cuba) |
| Elevation: | 50 feet above sea level |
| Population: | 3,000,000 in municipality; 2,200,000 in built-up area (municipality comprises 1,660 square miles and includes two rural counties) |
| Climate: | <u>Jan</u> <u>April</u> <u>July</u> <u>Oct</u> |
| Mean daily maximum temperature (°F) | 65 77 91 85 |
| Mean daily minimum temperature (°F) | 49 65 77 67 |
| Mean number of days with precipitation | 7 15 16 6 |
| Mean monthly precipitation (inches) | .9 6.8 8.1 3.4 |

KUANG-CHOU

Although the traditional Chinese name for the city, Kuang-chou, is gradually gaining acceptance outside of China, the conventional western name of Canton is still widely used.

General

Kuang-chou, about 75 miles northwest of Hong Kong, is the capital of Kwangtung Province and the only major industrial, trading, and cultural center in South China. Located at the head of the Chu Chiang (Pearl River) Delta, the city is the principal river port serving Kwangtung and Kwangsi Autonomous Region. Most of the built-up area of the city is located along and to the north of the Chu Chiang, although newer industrial, commercial, and supporting residential areas have expanded to the south and southwest of the old city core. The main north-south streets of the city slope gently toward the river from higher ground to the north, and a few miles to the north and northeast hills rise several hundred feet above the city. The nearest hill, Pai-yün Shan (White Cloud Mountain), commands an excellent view of the city and the surrounding rural countryside.

Kuang-chou has long been a focal point for cultural exchanges between Chinese and foreigners. It has been visited by traders and seamen from southern and southwestern Asia since antiquity and, in the 16th century, was the first Chinese city seen by European sailors. Now the city's Export Commodities Fair draws tens of thousands of businessmen from all around the world each spring and fall. The ancestors of most Chinese-Americans emigrated from the Kuang-chou area -- one byproduct of which has been the predominance of Cantonese-style cuisine (until very recently) in our Chinese restaurants.

Kuang-chou has a subtropical climate influenced by nearness to the sea, low elevation, and a location frequently affected by typhoons in August and September. Summer weather is hot and humid with numerous thunderstorms. Rainfall averages 64 inches a year, about 80 percent of which occurs from April through September. No pronounced winter season exists; instead, autumn gradually gives way to spring. Most visitors find October through March to be the most pleasant months.

Travelers to Kuang-chou from Hong Kong enter the city only by rail. Foreign visitors coming by way of Shanghai, Wu-han, or another Chinese city usually arrive by air, landing at Pai-yün Airfield, north of the city. A few also enter by rail.

History

The origins of the town are not clearly known, but the first settlement probably was established in the third century B.C. In A.D. 714 the T'ang dynasty government set up an office in Kuang-chou to handle foreign trade, making the city the first trading port in China. In the 10th century the city was the capital of an autonomous dynasty, the Southern Han.

After early contacts with Hindu, Persian, and Arab traders, Kuang-chou was visited by the Portuguese in 1516, followed by the British, Dutch, and French. Its trade prospered briefly after foreign concessions were granted in the mid-19th century, but the phenomenal growth of British Hong Kong soon eclipsed Kuang-chou as a foreign-trade center.

Along with trading goods, the Europeans introduced new political philosophies into Kuang-chou. Kuang-chou became a stronghold of revolutionary ideas. It was here that the Opium Wars began in 1839, and during the 1911 revolution Sun Yat-sen and other revolutionaries used Kuang-chou as a center of activity. Mao Tse-tung and other Communists operated the National Institute of the Peasant Movement here during 1925 and 1926 to train cadres for a movement that was assuming an increasingly important role in the Chinese revolution.

The modernization of Kuang-chou, which began in the 1920s and continued after the founding of the PRC in 1949, produced major changes in the form of new construction, widened and realigned streets, and industrial expansion south of Chu Chiang. Although the city retains its bustle and busy commercial atmosphere, Kuang-chou projects drabness enlivened only in part by its numerous public parks, gardens, and tree-lined streets. The major industrial section of the city is located at the end of the large island (Ho-nan Tao) across the Chu Chiang. Industries also are concentrated east of the city along the railroad line to Hong Kong. About 12 miles east of the central part of Kuang-chou is the deepwater port of Huang-pu (Whampoa), a major Chinese seaport accessible to oceangoing vessels of 10,000 tons.

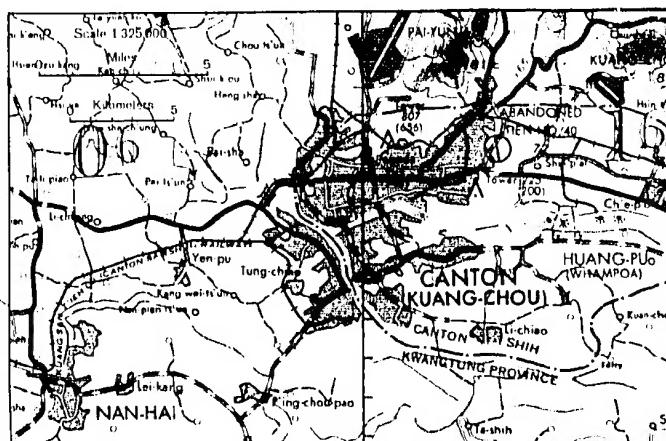
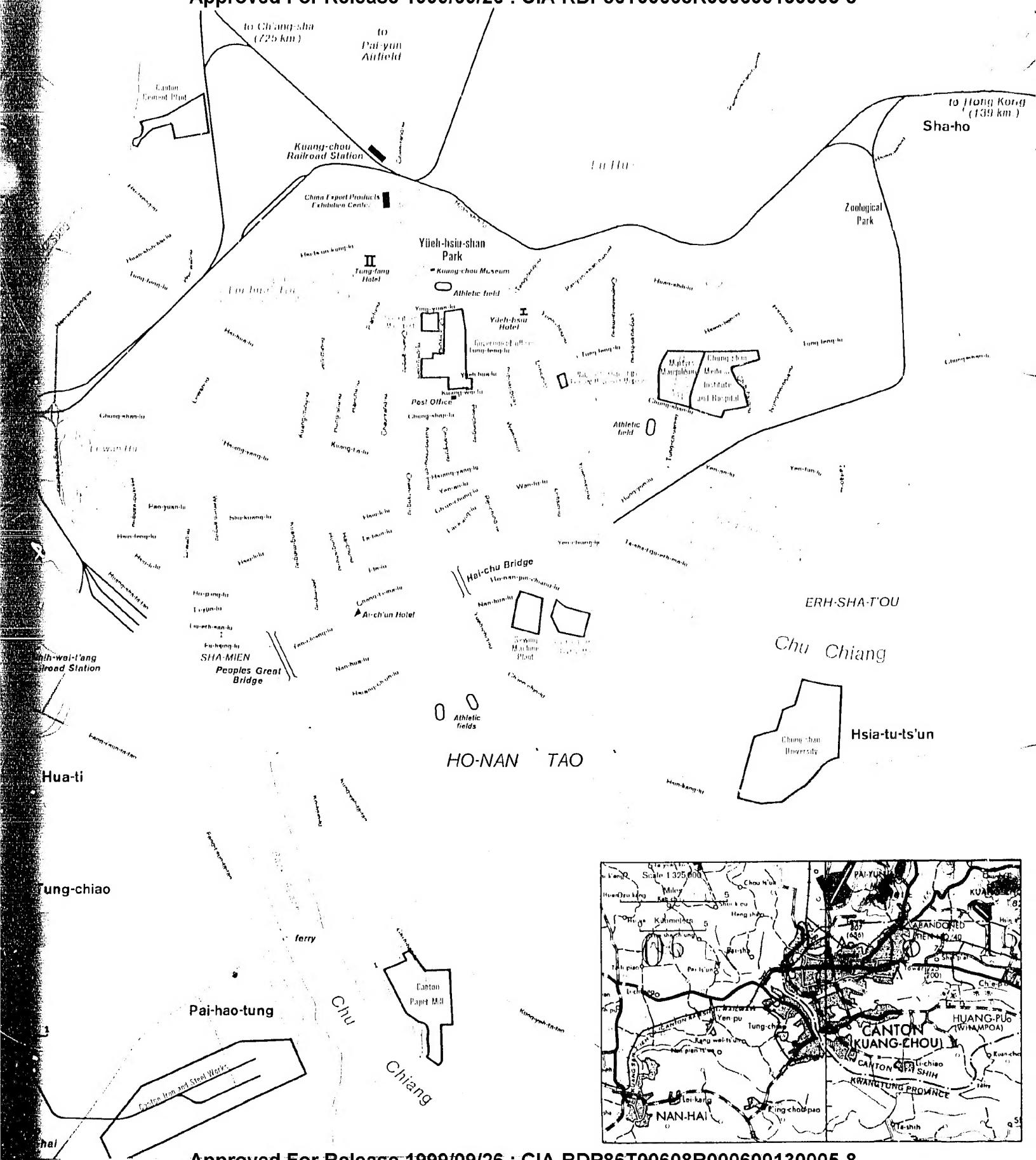
Kuang-chou's major industrial products are sugar, newsprint, ships, cement, steel, and chemicals. The sugar refinery, located in the northwestern suburbs, is one of the largest in the Pearl River Delta. It obtains its sugarcane from nearby cane-producing areas in Kwangtung Province. The papermill, in the southwestern part of the city, is China's largest producer of newsprint, drawing pulpwood from a vast area of southern China's forested hills and mountains. Other significant industries in Kuang-chou include machine manufacturing, textile and rubber goods production, and food canning.

Beginning with the 1974 Spring Trade Fair, the China Export Products Exhibition Center has been relocated on Chieh-fang-lu (road) in the northern outskirts of the city between the new Kuang-chou Railroad Station and the Tung-fang Hotel. The center is located within an area of parks and formal gardens and is at some distance from the busy commercial center of Kuang-chou.

Other landmarks of interest to the visitor include (1) the Sun Yat-sen Monument, standing in a large formal garden; (2) the Mausoleum of the Martyrs of the Kuang-chou Insurrection, which contains the remains of the victims of the Kuang-chou Commune who were killed by the Kuomintang in 1927; (3) the Zoological Park; and (4) Yueh-hsiu-shan Park, a vast public garden containing a stadium, swimming pools, a lake, and the Kuang-chou Historical Museum. Kuang-chou has numerous educational institutions, the largest of which are Chung-shan University, Chung-shan Medical Institute, Hua-nan Engineering Institute, Chi-nan University, and Hua-nan Teachers College. The small island of Sha-mien, lying west of the main commercial district, is the site of the former British and French concession. Today it is quiet and tree-shaded, its spacious houses and offices used for schools, administrative purposes, guesthouses, and for residences.

The city is the focal point of the river trade of Kwangtung and Kwangsi. From Kuang-chou, 2,000-ton vessels can travel 150 miles up the Hsi Chiang to Wu-chou, Kwangsi. Junks can penetrate deeply into Kwangtung Province, not only up the Hsi Chiang, but also up the Pei Chiang and the Tung Chiang and throughout the Pearl River Delta. A trunk rail line links Kuang-chou with Wu-han, and branch lines link the city with Ho-k'ou, 30 miles to the west, and with Hong Kong. Air service from Pai-yün Airfield connects Kuang-chou with all other major cities in China. All-weather roads radiate to other large towns in Kwangtung Province.

Approved For Release 1999/09/26 : CIA-RDP86T00608R000600130005-8



Approved For Release 1999/09/26 : CIA-RDP86T00608R000600130005-8